



## An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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28 June 1990

CONFIDENTIAL FAX

To Belfast  
For Joint Secretary

From HQ  
From M. Collins

Parades, your Fax 154 of 26/6/90 refers

The following relates to the Duncairn Gardens Parade and is based of feed-back which we have received from Brian Feeney. Material in relation to Newtownbutler will be forwarded separately.

Brian Feeney, along with Paddy Hunter had been present in the area throughout the parade. He can only be described as "venomous" in his reaction to the event.

The march was 40 minutes long and concluded at 8.45 p.m. As usual, the entire lower Antrim Road was sealed off with black taxis coming from town stuck; people going out on the Friday night were sealed into their ghettos; the more wealthy people up the Antrim Road going into town were stuck; people coming from the Novena at Holy Family Church in Newington were forced to wait for half an hour on Atlantic Avenue - in other words, according to Feeney the nationalist people of the area were subjected to the usual restrictions in order to allow the orange-men march through this section of nationalist north Belfast. Nor (for good reason) were the nationalist people allowed to witness the event - the route was cleared of people who were kept behind the screens which were in place for the occasion.

There were no major incidents during the march, nor did the police misbehave. In that context, Feeney's presence may have been helpful, though he apparently "took a lot of stick" from the locals about the march.

Feeney received a hand delivered letter from McAtamney on the morning of the march, which attempted to answer some of the points which Feeney has been making about this march. Feeney considers the letter to be totally unsatisfactory and he has replied to it in very strong terms in a letter which he sent yesterday to Annesley. Feeney in his letter makes all the usual points and in addition, says that the decision to allow the parade demonstrates that Annesley has no concern in improving community relations in North Belfast nor in improving relations between the police and the nationalist community in the area. He

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asserts that the local police are of the view that this decision is a major set-back to their community relations work in the area.

[In that context, Feeney had persuaded some local people from the New Lodge to attend a recent meeting with the police. That meeting had been an attempt by the police to set up a liaison committee and had been attended by people from both sides of the divide in the area. Feeney has told Annesley in his letter that he will be unable to arrange for nationalist attendance at future meetings of the group.]

Feeney is sending us a copy of this letter and it will be forwarded to you by fax upon receipt.

Comment:

It is clear from Mr Collins report of the meeting on parades of 21 June, "that the RUC take the view that they will only reroute a march if they are convinced that there is a serious risk of public disorder". In our view, there are dangers in this approach, which could be seen as implying that the only way in which the people in the Duncairn area can prevent this march in future is by rioting, and that representations by local constitutional nationalists carry little or no weight in the face of an assumed violent reaction from loyalists to any attempt to deny them the "right" to march through a nationalist area.

We face the same problem in relation to the parade along the Garvaghy Road in Portadown. You will have noted from our fax 108 of 19 June that Fr Lennon was infuriated that the RUC were adopting the same approach in relation to that parade. It would be useful if you could avail of a suitable opportunity to make it clear to the British side our profound objection to this approach by the RUC to the problem. As indicated in our fax 108, our approach continues to be the same as that enunciated by the Secretary of State in June 1986 -viz- that parades should not take place in an area or along a route where they are not welcome. We have received no explanation as to why the RUC are now articulating a policy which is substantially at variance with the 1986 approach.